

'not yet five'



New Edition

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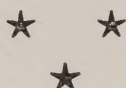
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FOREWORD

THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET IS TO EXPLAIN IN AN unofficial way, with a minimum of technicalities, what Nurseries (by which is meant Day Nurseries and Nursery Schools and Nursery Classes) do for children. The book refers in general to the needs of children between the ages of 2 and 5, and not those of babies under 2, as the care of babies in a Nursery involves a technique of a rather different character. Moreover, the Babies' Nursery will normally be under the supervision of trained nurses. Subject to this limitation, the Ministries of Education and Health hope that the book will serve to enlighten the public generally on the work of Nurseries, and especially to interest girls and women of 15 and upward who wish to take up Nursery work.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Nurseries are pleasant places. For some people the word “ nursery ” may take them back to the days of their own childhood, but many of those who read this book to-day will probably associate the word with the Day Nurseries which are the successors of the war-time Nurseries that enabled so many mothers to help war production, and with the Nursery Schools and Classes.

In a good home the mother is the person who takes responsibility for the care and protection of her children. She will see to it that they are safe and happy and have things to play with, and she will always listen to them and encourage them to talk. She will see that the children get the right kind of meals, properly cooked ; that they are washed and clothed and kept warm ; that they have enough rest and sleep, air and exercise, and have a doctor or nurse to help them when they are ill or hurt. All these things must also be a part of the life of a Nursery in which there are groups of children under five away from their homes and without their mother.

The mother who brings her children at the beginning of the day and fetches them at the end will want to be sure that all these things are being done for them, and her daily visits will give her some opportunity of seeing what life in the Nursery is like and of asking the staff about any difficulties she may feel in regard to her own children.

There will probably be many children in the Nurseries, and it takes a good many people to do the work, for the needs of children under five are very great. These young children are the men and women of to-morrow, and the country cannot therefore afford to neglect them. The work of the Nurseries must be so well done that no mother in the country would hesitate to entrust her children to their care. The aim of this book is to show how the Nurseries are run and how people can help in the work.

In setting up a Nursery the Authority concerned must first find suitable premises, the right equipment, and a suitable staff.

Take the *premises* first. Here are a few of the absolute necessities which a Nursery for children under five must have :

- (1) It must provide healthy conditions indoors—that means

enough space, light and air ; and ample opportunities for playing out-of-doors.

(2) It should be in as convenient a place as possible so that mothers will not find it too difficult to bring their children to and fro.

(3) The premises must be suitably warmed ; water must be laid on ; there must be drainage for the lavatories, and means of cooking meals for the children and staff.

Next there is the *equipment* : this will be provided by the Authority responsible for setting up the Nursery. After the essentials have been provided, however, much may still be done to make the Nursery more home-like and attractive, so that children who enter rather anxiously on the first day can recognise at once that someone has understood what children like. How can this be done ? To begin with, it will make all the difference if there are light and colour in the Nursery ; toys painted in bright colours, perhaps some gay little curtains in front of the shelves and attractive-looking flowers, pictures, books, crockery. Then in the planning of the Nursery the height and reach of the children must influence the arrangements, and the Authority will see that there are shelves and cupboards which the children can reach ; basins and towels at the right height ; mirrors they can see themselves in ; chairs and stools they can sit on easily ; handles they can turn, and boxes they can carry. There will be proper places for storing big toys and small toys, dolls, chalks, paints, a bath for water play, and so on.

Now for the *staff*. There are, generally speaking, several groups of people who are needed to look after young children in Nurseries. There are specially trained Nursery Teachers, Nursery Nurses, or Wardens who have taken courses of training. There are also assistants and helpers who work under the guidance of the more expert members of the staff. There are cooks, gardeners, and cleaners who all make an important contribution. Finally, there are doctors, dieticians and state registered nurses who act as expert advisers.

All those who have the well-being of young children at heart are agreed on one important thing, that it is as bad to care only for the body and neglect the mind as it is to care only for the mind and neglect the body. The child who is scrupulously clean but desperately unhappy is not being helped to grow into a useful member of the community ; the child who is bright and intelligent and is physically unhealthy or has bad habits may become an unsatisfactory citizen later on. This is why it is most important to see that the staff of the Nursery can, between them, look after all sides of the children's welfare. They must each respect the work of the other ; it is ideal when they all study all sides of the work of the Nursery and think of it as one complete job.



2. A DAY IN THE NURSERY

An ideal day in a Nursery reflects as nearly as possible the kind of day which makes a contented child at home. The happiest child is one who lives in a home in which he feels safe because he knows without doubt that he belongs to it and that he is welcome there. An orderly home in which duties and pleasures follow some understood routine helps to give a child this sense of safety. He knows he will have meals, be kept warm and clean, play his own games without interference, go to bed ; and he also knows that some grown-up person is ordering it all. This sense of security helps to make him confident, encourages him to move and speak without fear and gradually to become independent and helpful to others.

It is the first aim of the staff of a Nursery to provide this sense of security for the children. They do it in the following ways. First, they are sympathetic, cheerful and reliable, for by the attitude of the staff the children will soon know whether they are really welcome or not. Secondly, they try to keep an orderly arrangement in the Nursery, so that the children know where everything is and where it should be put away, for muddle and confusion will be a sure source of temper and tears, and will prove very harassing to the staff. Thirdly, they make and follow a programme and do their best to prevent its being broken. It is not the purpose of this book to say what the exact order of the children's day should be, for the staff, of course, make their own plans, but the programme always includes play both in and out of doors, having meals, washing and going to the lavatory, relaxation and sleep.

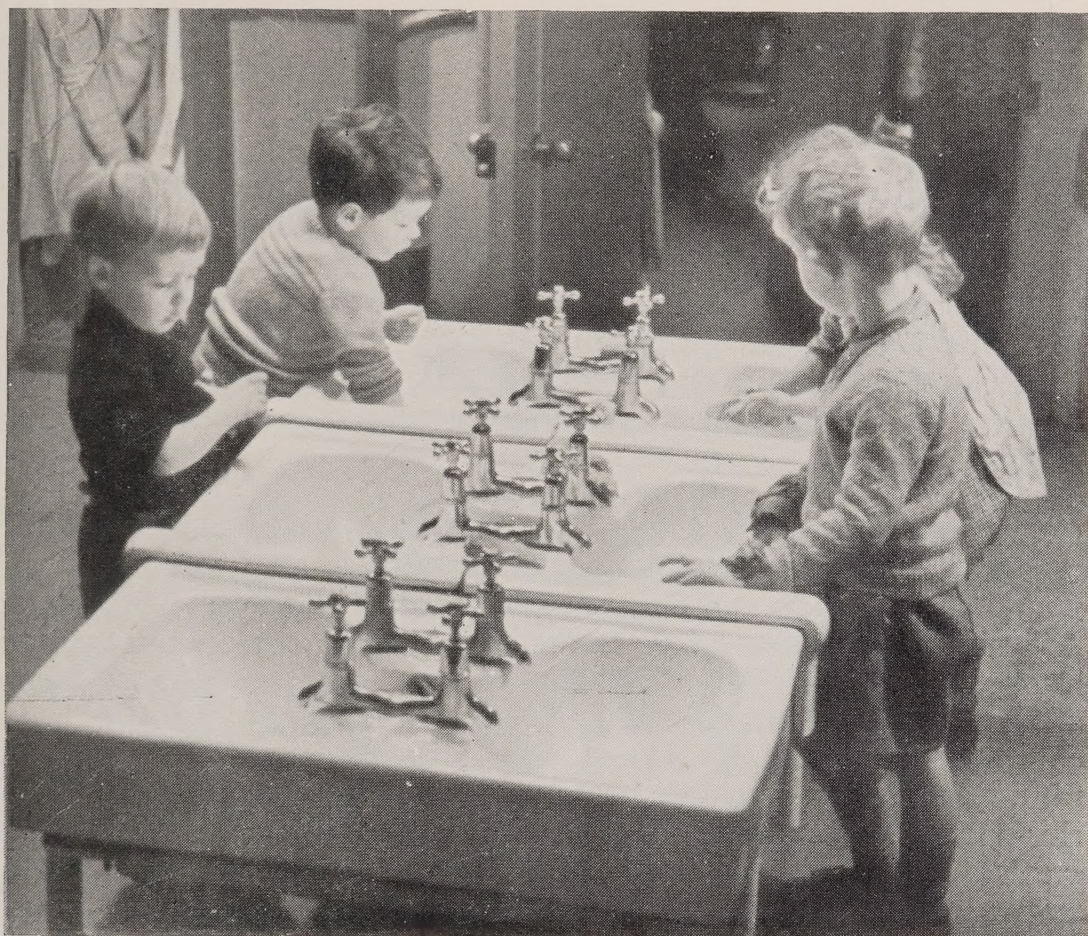


Photo by Gerti Deutsch from *Picture Post*.

(a) Washing, Dressing, Care of the Hair.

Washing. Many Nurseries provide the means of washing the children in baths, and as this is skilled work the children cannot do it for themselves. But during the day there are other occasions for washing, and here is an opportunity for the children's education. Learning to wash and dry hands and face is a great joy to young children and time is allowed for them to become skilful. The staff soon find out what children can do, or can be expected to do by themselves. For instance, two-year-olds can generally turn on taps and soon learn to turn them off ; at first they need to have water poured out in a basin for them, but they can more easily pour it away and quickly learn to pour from a jug as well. Before they begin to wash, the children find their own towels from specially marked pegs which should be so arranged that the towels do not touch ; they are encouraged to take their time and with help learn to manage water, soap, face cloth and towel, though they continue to need supervision. It is generally possible to give a child the opportunity of washing as well as he can at least once a day. The use of the toothbrush, too, should be taught and encouraged, but it is very important that careful arrangements should be made to ensure freedom from the spread of infection.

Dressing. There are plenty of opportunities in a Nursery for

experience in dealing with clothes. Coats and hats and pull-ups have to be taken off, shoes are changed, pinafores or overalls or dungarees are put on and taken off. Obviously the two-year-olds need much help, but with care and encouragement and by watching other children they can learn a great deal. The training is quite gradual. For instance, there is much to learn about the right-way-up of clothes ; the helper will put one arm into a sleeve and leave the child to carry on, or she will button the top button and leave him to do the second. Slowly the child gains independence and the power to help others, and it is generally quite evident from their skill in dressing themselves which children have been in the Nursery for any length of time.

Care of the Hair. The care of the children's hair is a daily job for the Nursery staff ; any signs of uncleanness are promptly dealt with, and if the hair is much tangled it is brushed as well as combed. As with the business of washing, the children are encouraged to learn to use their own brush and comb. Even the youngest can attempt this before a mirror, and though they may only be able to comb the front part of the hair, it is an achievement. Children of four and over can generally part their own hair and even tie it with a ribbon. The good habit of brushing and combing the hair before meals forms part of the training in the Nursery. It is worth emphasising the importance of each child having and using his own brush and comb.

(b) Use of the Lavatory.

The habit of going to the lavatory at regular times is an important piece of training which all Nurseries give. The staff of the Nursery know that this bodily function may not be easy for all young children and that they often suffer a good deal of anxiety in regard to it. It is most important to treat this part of the work of the Nursery simply, kindly, and naturally ; when accidents occur, as they are bound to do, they must be taken calmly, and the children will know that they can rely on the staff to help them in their need. Good habits develop quite naturally when the normal working of the body is treated in a sensible way. To achieve these good habits the lavatories must be of a kind that the children can learn to manage for themselves. There should be a sufficient number of small lavatories to avoid the children having to wait or to hurry ; seats should lift up and chairs should be within reach. The staff know that scrupulous cleanliness must be observed.

(c) Meals.

Enough food, and the right kind of food are essentials in keeping up the well-being of children. Carefully planned meals at regular times and in happy conditions are recognised as very important features in the life of a Nursery of whatever kind it may be.

The arrangements for the midday meal, particularly, deserve a great deal of care, and for various reasons.

From the point of view of the food itself, there should be a varied diet, a good balance of the various food values, and cooking of a kind which preserves the goodness in the food. The rations of meat, milk, cheese, fats, etc., allowed by the Government to children, should be used to the full. Fresh water—and plenty of it—should be provided for drinking ; salads, fresh vegetables and fruit are all important to the children's health.

But the meal has other values for the children. For instance, it is an occasion when they learn certain skills, such as the use of spoon or fork ; they can help in getting ready the meal and in serving each other and become handy in lifting and carrying plates or cups, pouring from a jug or ladling with a spoon. All these are useful accomplishments as well as happy experiences. Then, too, the children have the pleasure of eating their meal in the company of other children and some grown ups, in an atmosphere which should be, and usually is, free from hurry or strain, when everyone can eat and talk and enjoy their food. This atmosphere can only be produced if the meals are punctual, and served at times which are suitable for the children, if they are hot and appetising, and if all concerned combine to help the children to make a good meal without fuss or anxiety. It will be remembered that children often take a long time, and they will probably not eat enough, and not enjoy it, if they are over-harassed by well-meaning attempts to preserve a standard of social behaviour which is too high for their age. A good deal has been said and written about the value of the midday meal as “ social training,” but good manners and habits are only learnt gradually and must not be imposed on very young



children at the expense of adequate nutrition. The same kind of comment might be made on the old adage that children should learn to eat what is set before them. This really implies developing a wide and catholic taste in food, which is an excellent asset in life. But with very young children, the approach to the ideal is important and they should be introduced to new foods and new tastes gradually and in small quantities, and their own natural likes and dislikes should be treated with the respect they deserve without absurd indulgence. It is occasionally possible to give a small choice of foods at a meal, and this may have more effect on the children's taste and character than might be realised at the time. It is an opportunity for the child to make his own decision and develop as an individual.

All those responsible for the meal should understand what kind and amount of food children of this age should have. They should also remember what it means to children to know and discover how the meal is prepared. Children may perhaps have an opportunity of seeing the vegetables cut from the garden, peep in at the kitchen and see the food being cooked and follow its progress till it actually appears on the table.

Everything connected with the preparation and service of food in Nurseries must be bright, clean and orderly. Clean, well-polished plate and crockery make the meals attractive, and the appearance and condition of the table appointments no doubt make a strong impression on the children. Everyone assists with the clearing of tables and the packing of crockery, but the children take no part in washing-up as this is essentially a job for adults. At the same time washing-up is most important, not only as a safeguard to health, but in order to preserve the picture of cleanliness and orderliness. To keep the ware in good condition it must be handled with care to prevent cracks and chips ; it must be washed in very hot water to ensure the removal of grease which may harbour dirt and lead to infection ; it must be drained, polished with dry tea-towels and packed away in sets easily available for the next meal.

In general, it may be said that the main object of all this co-operative work on the meals in the Nursery is that children should have good appetites and enjoy their food, and begin to appreciate pleasant ways of eating.

(d) Sleep.

In all Nurseries there are times when the children rest and relax. These quiet periods are vital to healthy development, and to make them possible the Nurseries are equipped with stretcher beds carefully designed to suit the size of the children, sufficiently near the ground for them to get in and out easily, but not so low that their bodies touch the ground when they are lying in them. Great care is taken to see that the beds are well spaced and do not touch each other, and that each child has his own stretcher and blanket. It is a good thing for children to sleep out of doors, and in order to



make this possible in cold weather extra warmth for the beds is provided. Children learn to take off their shoes before they rest, and put them on again, and many of them to get the beds out and put them away again, and fold up the blankets.

The length of time that children require to sleep in the daytime varies a good deal with individuals and according to age. Some children, particularly the older ones in the Nursery, need only a short sleep, and it is usually possible to arrange for them to relax or play quietly and to avoid disturbing those who are actually sleeping. Some children are restless because they are too afraid and anxious to sleep, especially when they first come to the Nursery. But when they find that other children sleep safely, and that the familiar helpers are still there when they wake up, they soon gain confidence and benefit very much from the rest. Some children wake up very slowly ; the staff do not wake any children suddenly, and try to arrange the beds so that sound sleep is not disturbed by those children who are ready to get up, or already at play.

(e) Play.

Every young child wants to play, and play is something more to him than mere enjoyment. Everything he sees interests him. He explores, touches, handles, and is curious about the things around him ; and all that he discovers he uses in play. In giving ample opportunities for play the Nursery staff are doing much to educate the children, but if they deprive the children of play and expect them to sit still and do nothing they are doing positive harm. The staff in the Nursery soon learn to recognise the various ways in

which the children play, and try to provide the necessary materials and opportunities for this play.

Here are some of the ways in which children occupy themselves in play :—

(i) Anyone who watches a young child will realise that one kind of play which satisfies him is that in which he uses his big muscles and experiments in large movements with his arms and legs. He likes to climb ladders, steps or walls, to push or drag carts, and in general to attempt things which obviously offer some physical difficulty. This muscular play is quite natural ; it is the beginning in the small child of a mastery over his own limbs and a power to balance himself. The Nursery equipment includes the kind of things which make it possible for children to throw themselves into this kind of play. It may not possess the expensive toys which are specially designed for such play, but it will certainly have very much cheaper equivalents, things over which the children can clamber or which they can push or drag about. These improvised toys will be planks, big wooden boxes, barrels, logs of wood, or branches, which give the children the kind of thing they need.

(ii) Another kind of play is the one in which the child tries experiments with the different kinds of material around him. Water, sand, or clay are endlessly interesting to him. It is not at all necessary to show a child what to do with these materials ; to provide them to play with is enough, though his attempts to discover the nature of the materials will be much more exciting if he can also be provided with the means of dealing with them ;





buckets and small spades or wooden spoons, patty pans, sieves, bottles of different sizes, rubber tubing, shells, corks, and the like, which will add a good deal to his pleasure and experience.

(iii) Another kind of play may be described as “ creative ” or “ constructive,” and here a child must have some material to make his play worth while. For this play he needs something to build with such as bricks, bits of wood, boxes of all kinds ; also any





simple material which he can turn into games about such topics as railways, houses, ships, farms. All this material will be used in a resourceful way by the children, and they will be delighted to have such toys as little animals, toy furniture, motor cars, engines, signals, tunnels, etc.

(iv) Another kind of play with which children often occupy themselves is playing at being other people—fathers and mothers, nurses at the clinic or hospital, postmen, soldiers, etc. This play naturally imitates many of the real occupations of life, and often reflects the most striking events in the children's own lives. Children know best about the life in their own homes and they will spend much time doing such things in their play as making beds, sweeping, mopping up spills, looking after dolls, having a wash-day, cooking, and so on. They do not always take the part of human beings, but are equally happy in playing at being motor cars, aeroplanes, horses and birds.

(v) Children also like to scribble, draw, paint, paste, tear and cut, and if a sensible amount of time is given for this kind of play there is less risk of the destruction of other people's property. Odd scraps of paper, chinks, paints, brushes and scissors form part of this play, and they should not be difficult to supply because it is not at all likely that all the children will want to use them at the same time.

(vi) Children are also very interested in play in which they use their hands and fingers, and the Nursery makes a collection of material for this. Beads and cotton reels are needed to thread ; pebbles, shells, beans which can be sorted ; little things which can be fitted into bigger ones ; simple jig-saw puzzles, jars or tins with screw tops, and anything of the same kind which gives children the experience of gaining skill with their fingers.

Most of the occupations already described will be chosen by the



children individually and they will usually like, at first, to play by themselves—sometimes, when play is going on, the children come together in small groups to see anything of interest and share each other's play. Some kinds of play are enjoyed by larger groups (but not necessarily the whole group), and will need the help of a grown-up person to make them worth while. These larger groups may enjoy singing, dancing or playing simple games.

If the teacher or warden can sing or mark rhythms by tapping a drum, children will soon show how much they want to join in and dance about with the music. They will make up their own dances, either by themselves or with other children. Picture books and stories have their place in this kind of play. Children like to have pages to look at and turn over, or stories they can listen to. There is a great deal to know about the way to choose music and stories suitable for little children, and no space in this book to discuss the matter at length, but every one agrees that we cannot go wrong if we keep to the good things, old traditional nursery rhymes, and rhythms, tunes and songs which we are proud to hand on to the children. Stories, too, must be chosen with some care. Children like to hear stories about other children who have experiences like their own, or about familiar animals and the way they live, or about the pictures in their books. Fairy tales are probably more enjoyable at a rather later age than five. The stories very young children like best are short ones, and it means a lot to them when the stories end happily and the good people are successful. As with everything else in the Nursery, these tales and tunes and games and the language in which the staff talk to the children, become part of the children's make-up and form a foundation for literary and musical education. That is why they must be as good as we know how to make them.

It must not be supposed that the children who come to a Nursery spend the whole day indoors. On the contrary, as much time as possible is spent in the open air all the year round. Many of the activities described above can be carried on outside as well as inside provided great care is taken to see that the children are warmly clothed in cold weather. Children like freedom to run in and out, and the outdoor space is a most important part of the lay-out of the Nursery. The fortunate Nurseries are those in which this space admits of varied and interesting play for the children—space in which to run about, paths along which children can wheel their carts, a sand pit in which to dig. It adds greatly to the children's interest if there is a real garden with trees, flowers and vegetables, and opportunities of seeing the work of planting, tending and gathering. This interest can be carried on inside the Nursery as well, where the children can see the growth of flowering seeds, or bulbs, or mustard and cress, and without knowing it are actually watching a whole cycle of life. Children under five cannot do real gardening, but if there is a spare piece of garden they much enjoy digging the soil.

Beyond the garden of the Nursery there are other out-of-door



experiences for the children. Sometimes they go for little walks, and this part of the programme needs as clear a plan as everything else in the Nursery. The sympathetic teacher or Nursery nurse never takes children for a long dull walk with no objective beyond that of getting exercise. For young children every walk must have its purpose, even such a simple one as "to see the man who is cleaning cars in the garage," "to see the dog who lives at the house with the green door." Everyone should know that a dull aimless walk on which the children drag along with tired legs defeats its



purpose, but a short walk with a simple objective can be of sparkling interest.

A word may be said about the significance of the kitchen in the Nursery. Here the children's meals are cooked and they feel that it is a link with their own homes. A lonely child, missing home, recognises the kitchen as something familiar and welcoming. A place to visit, perhaps to be allowed to help in some small way. The homely character of the Nursery is greatly strengthened when the kitchen is allowed to be the centre of its life.

These notes on the children's life in the Nursery may well be followed by a few suggestions about material which is useful to collect. Here they are :—

Pushing and pulling toys : scooters, wheelbarrows, hoops, old tyres, boxes on wheels that can be used as carts, balls.

Sand, buckets, spades, wooden spoons, tunnels, strainers, old sink or bath, pieces of hose-pipe, trays, water-cans, clay.

Bricks, strips of wood, boxes of all kinds, rope, toys such as little animals, furniture, motors.

Dolls with dresses which can be put on and taken off, dolls' beds with bedclothes, dolls' prams, cooking toys, brooms, tea-things, dustpans, clothes-pegs, simple gardening tools, materials for dressing-up.

Chalks, paints, large brushes, scissors, books of wall-paper, scrap books, tins of paint, easels.

Beads, cotton-reels, pebbles, shells, jig-saws, jars with screw tops, nests of boxes.

Gramophone, cards, piano, picture books, books of songs.

3. PLAYING WITH THE CHILDREN

Many children have a clear idea as to what kind of play they would like to choose during the day. These children present little difficulty to the staff. For them the main need is material to play with, and the work of the staff is to see that the materials are there and to take an interest in what the children do. It is often found that this particularly active type of child needs to be reminded that he cannot have all the toys to himself. It is equally certain that if this child is not occupied he will rapidly become what is called "naughty."

There is also the slower child who seems shy and timid. He is pleased if the staff show the toys to him and bring some of the materials to his notice ; it will give him confidence if they will play with him sometimes and show him what can be done with some of the toys.

Some children will cling to the grown-ups more than is normal and need their support for nearly everything they do. The staff look out for this tendency and are prepared to give what help they can, watching for signs of greater confidence. This will show itself in very simple ways, for instance, putting on hat or coat alone, deciding what toy to play with next, or offering to help serve the food at meals.



Another kind of child is the one who is bumptious and interfering, who will take a delight in knocking down bricks and generally spoiling other children's fun. This is not a happy child, and the best way of helping him is to ignore his interferences as much as possible, but to remember that he may be making play impossible for other children. This child expects the grown-up to be really firm and prevent him from hurting others. It is generally advisable to take a strong line with him and then try to find some material that will hold his attention.

The children may want to play alone or with others. The grown-up will not just be watching even when the children are busy playing on their own with the material she has provided. She will need to watch for their safety, and help them when they want it and she will also be observing their choice and use of material for play. She will be ready with suggestions for new occupations or with fresh ideas about how to use familiar material, as and when they seem to be required. Conversation about what is being done will be taking place all the time, and in this way she can often help the children to put their experiences into words, and to learn new words, and new ways of expressing themselves.

There will frequently be opportunities through the day for the children and grown-ups to do things together such as dancing, singing, listening to music or telling stories. It is only very rarely that all the children in a group feel inclined to do these things at the same time but it is often a good thing to invite certain shy children to come and listen and join in, as only in this way can they realise what fun it is.

This gives some idea of the variety of children who come into the Nursery and shows how important it is to be adaptable and to play with them in such a way that they will become happy members of a group. Members of the staff are always ready to show pleasure about anything of which the children are proud, to admire the building or dancing, or any achievement, and to point out to other children any success made by a slow child.

With an age range of two to five years there are great advantages in having two rooms, because children of two and three do not behave in quite the same way as those of four and five. The youngest children will not be as inclined as the older ones to give absorbed attention to a particular kind of occupation such as making houses of brick, having dolls' tea-parties, and painting pictures, and they may have to be restrained from running about as they would like. It is a very good thing if there are times when the children of different ages are free to play in their own way undisturbed, and if there are not two separate rooms a good programme will make some allowances for this.

The attitude of the staff in the Nursery is never dictatorial. They are ready to help a child in every way and will always listen to his talk and answer his questions if they can. An understanding teacher or Nursery Nurse knows that she herself possesses a great deal which she can share with the children and which will help to make them grow into interesting people. She can tell them stories, sing to them, draw pictures for them and perhaps play a violin or a pipe and, as well as this, all her pleasures in colour or rhythm, her care for animals, plants and flowers, or any interesting thing she brings to the Nursery, will be watched and shared by the children who will receive in this way something they are too young to ask for.

4. SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

The Nursery must take the responsibility for the children's health and well-being which would be the natural care of the mother in a good home. The contact with more children than is usual in a family makes the avoidance of infection very important.

First of all the personal health of each child must be safeguarded and he must be helped to grow up strong enough to resist disease. This is done by various means already described in this book ; for instance, by giving the child sensible well-chosen and properly cooked food, seeing that he has enough sleep and rest as well as interesting activity in and out of doors, training him in good bodily habits by regular and kindly routine and keeping him warm and clean. It has been shown also that in all this important work there are opportunities for educating the children, so that bodily and mental growth are being considered at the same time.

But as well as safeguarding the health of each individual child, the Nursery must also consider the health of the group. Here, of course, the main problem is to prevent one child infecting another. This work forms part of the regular routine of the Nursery and it is carried out in the following ways : by keeping the Nursery well ventilated so that there is always plenty of fresh air, by seeing that the children are out of doors as much as possible and are suitably dressed to meet various kinds of weather, by helping the children to wash and to use their own individual towels, face-cloths, combs and toothbrushes. In addition there must be a very high standard of cleanliness in the Nursery itself : all cups, spoons, cloths and blankets, etc., must receive constant care, and the most efficient methods must be used to clean and wash utensils, towels and all the things the children handle. By these commonsense precautions the risks of epidemics in the Nursery are much reduced, but, of course, illness is bound to appear just as it does at home, and the means of dealing with it must be provided.

A simple precaution against the spread of infection is the provision of a separate room in which a child who seems to be ill can be kept away from other children while he is waiting for his mother or for

the doctor. But there are other ways in which the spread of infectious disease can be prevented, and one of the most important of these is the simple process known as immunisation. This is used to prevent diphtheria, and arrangements can be and are being made in the Nurseries for it to be done. In some Nurseries immunisation against whooping cough is also carried out.

The help of trained nurses and doctors is a very important part of the work of the Nurseries. They must see that all the measures described above are carried out, that suspected cases of illness are isolated and that the right sort of treatment for lesser ailments is given on the spot.

5. NOTE ON THE STAFF EMPLOYED IN NURSERIES

(a) Nursery Schools and Classes.

Nursery Schools are staffed by Qualified Teachers, Temporary Teachers, Nursery Assistants and Nursery Students.

Teachers. Girls who want to become Teachers should consult their Local Education Authority about the steps to take.

Nursery Assistants are usually women over 18 who have taken a short course of instruction for work with children under five, like the Senior Child Care Reserve Courses held during the war. Local Education Authorities will be running courses of this kind for some time to come, and women who would like to take one should ask their Authority if any will be held near their home. The courses last for about three weeks.

Nursery Students in Day or Residential Nurseries or in Nursery Schools or Nursery Classes are normally girls from 15 to 18, and will usually be following a two-year course of training at the end of which they take the examination for the certificate of the National Nursery Examination Board. Students working for this certificate spend two days a week or the equivalent attending a course of further education in professional subjects (Health and Education) and general subjects (Biology, English, Household Arts, Music, etc.), and the remainder of their time in practical work at the Nursery.

On the successful completion of the course, the student can remain in the Nursery School as a Nursery Assistant if she wishes, or work as a Nursery Nurse in a Day or Residential Nursery, or as a Nanny in a private family.

Girls who would like to take this course should ask their Local Education Authority for particulars. The syllabus of the course in professional subjects can be obtained free of charge from the

Secretary of the National Nursery Examination Board, c/o the Royal Sanitary Institute, 90 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1, and that for general subjects from H.M. Stationery Office, through any bookseller, price 1d.

Free meals are provided for members of the staff when on duty.

(b) Day and Residential Nurseries.

Day or Residential Nurseries catering for children of all ages up to five are usually in the charge of a Matron and a Deputy Matron. Other members of the staff, in addition to the Teacher, are certificated Nursery Nurses, Nursery Assistants (e.g. ex-nannies or persons who have taken the C.C.R. course), and Student Nursery Nurses. Exclusive of domestic staff the ratio of full-time staff to children is not less than 1:5 in Day Nurseries and 1:3 in Residential Nurseries, three students in training being reckoned as one member of the staff. It is possible for certificated Nursery Nurses to rise to the higher posts after the necessary experience.

In Residential Nurseries daily off-duty time is arranged, as it is in Day Nurseries when the hours of opening exceed eight. In Residential Nurseries board and lodging are provided, and in the Day Nurseries free meals are provided when on duty for all students and for Nursery Assistants who are under 19 years of age. Other staff, except qualified teachers, are charged £20 per annum for meals.

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